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VEER HANUMAN: A ROLE MODEL FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH



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We have lots to learn from the towering personality of Veer Hanuman, a key figure of the Ramayana. He articulated a rare mix of strength, devotion and perseverance.



आदित्य ब्रह्मचारी, परम बलवान,
चतुर और बुद्धिमान, श्री रामचंद्र
जी के परम भक्त और सहायक,
वेदों और व्याकरण के पंडित,
अंजनी पुत्र श्री हनुमान जी के
जन्मदिवस की हार्दिक
शुभकामनाएं

Hanuman Jayanti is the birthday anniversary of Veer Hanuman, an eminent scholar of the Vedas and grammarian, a celibate who demonstrated immense self-control, the mighty, clever and wise, devotee and helpmate of Shri Rama.

The Ramayana, one of the greatest epics of humanity written by Sage Valmiki, is not just a story. It is a prominent educational medium to demonstrate the importance of values and ethics in life. A key personality of the Ramayana, Veer Hanuman was an ideal combination of strength, heroic initiative and assertive excellence. He exemplified unlimited selfless love and emotional devotion to Shri Ram. The characters depict what we usually aspire to be like.

The values that we would want our children to imbibe would be best taught when we lead-by-example and walk-the-talk ...and there shall remain little or no need to command as in the Ramayana. We have lots to learn from the towering personality of Veer Hanuman who articulated a rare mix of valour, dedication and perseverance.

Strength (Shakti): Hanuman is also known as *Mahavira* as he was extraordinarily strong, and bravely, serenely and safely surfed across various adverse/dangerous situations.

Brahmacharya was key to that limitlessness and powerful physical and mental inner strength. He did not indulge in sensual pleasures, preserved the vital life force energies and put them to good use. Contrarily, Ravana's obsession and depravity led to his downfall.

Devotion (Bhakti): Talented, strong and brave, Hanuman was the exemplary devotee (*bhakta*) of Rama and Sita, a communion as smooth as a river flowing downhill. The *Valmiki Ramayana*, depicts Ram and Sita as the ideal, virtuous and compassionate man and woman respectively and Hanuman asserts himself in the various attributes assigned therein.

Perseverance (Dridhataa): His various prowess were no supernatural powers but acquired through austerity (*tapa*), involving consistent/coherent practice over a long period of time with passion and devotion.

Hanuman, a human being & an accomplished Yogi: His father was Kesari and mother Anjanee, both human beings; common sense says that the child of human beings should be human being. That affirmation is confirmed in the Valmiki Ramayan and the later script – Hanuman Chaalisa, Hanuman was a scholarly person who mastered the Scriptures (Vedas) and ancillary spiritual texts (*Vidyavaan guni ati chatur*). He carried the mace in one hand, the flag in the other, and wore the sacred thread on his shoulder (*Haath Vajra Aur Dhuvaje Viraaaje Kaandhe moonj janehu sajai*). Hanuman was an accomplished Yogi (*Ashta-sidhi nav nidhi ke dhaataa*).

He belonged to Vaanara community. The common meaning is monkey BUT etymology of the word reveals: Van = forest + nara = human being, that is forest dweller. He has a focused and devoted mind and to become like Hanuman we need to tame our monkey-like mind, assert our being-ness by living in the present learning our lessons from past experiences but not dwell on the past griefs as well as plan the future but ending our life in dreaming.

Surrender (Samarpan): His greatness was a complete surrender in serving Rama, which also formed the base of his genial qualities. Rama describes Hanuman as 'hard to find another who is at once so powerful, learned, and philosophic, yet humble!'

Right First Impression: Rama was highly impressed during the very first meeting with Hanuman's and he commented: "None can talk this way without mastering the Vedas. He has such a flawless countenance, a wonderful accent, and a captivating way of speaking. He has the ability to move even an enemy..."

Self-control: After finding the whereabouts of Sita in Lanka, Hanuman showed great resilience to the torture ordered by Ravana and his tenacity was instrumental to the victory of Rama.

Compassion: He saved the life of Lakshmana by fetching the life-giving herb "Sanjivani".

Blessed with long-life (Chiranjeevee): Various versions of the *Ramayana* state that Hanuman is blessed to be immortal. As such everything born is bound to die. In fact, his devotion and perseverance will remain forever as an indelible part of humanity.

As a fervent devotee of Rama he complied with what he was asked to do ...a devoted child follows the guidance of his parents ...a devoted student completes his works as instructed by the teacher; AND that yardstick tells us that ...**a devotee (bhakta) of Hanuman or Rama has to filter down**

the character, deeds, sense of self-discipline, temperament, etc. into his day-to-day life as it has been rightly said: *Charitra ki puja karo, chitra ki nahin.*

Beauty: Hanuman is mostly described in the *sundar kanda* of various versions of the Ramayana for the inner beauty reflected in his works.

Creative and ingenuous personality: He repeatedly turned the odds each time he faced difficulties, adversaries or circumstances threatening his mission with certain defeat and/or his very existence.

Remover of obstacles (*Sankat Mochan*): His willpower guided him to be the *remover of obstacles* in his path. We need to realise that each and every human being is empowered to be his own *remover of obstacles*; the terms and conditions to realise that are “silencing of the mental and emotional activities and listen to the inner voice!”

Self-introspection (aatmanirikshan), Self-realisation

- For his first meeting with Rama Hanuman was disguised as a Brahmin ...rituals are only the first steps to attain spiritual communion; Dharma and Yama-Niyama lived on a 24x7 basis is crucial to Self and God-Realisation.
- Jambvan prompted Hanuman on his powers ...our inner voice is the inseparable trigger to recognise our potential.
- Hanuman's crossing the ocean eventually brought an end to the atrocities of Ravana and his ensembles ...we need to acquire true knowledge (*vidyaa*) and shun ignorance (*avidyaa*) if we want to put an end to ego (*asmitaa*), inordinate attachment (*raaga*), hatred (*dvesha*) and misconceptions (*abhinivesha*) to know our true self and experience spirituality as spiritual reality.

The *Ramayana*'s characters have found their way into the common speech and idiom across various cultures and civilisation. Chanting of the *Ramayana* are common. The epic has been adapted into plays and films; it is also enacted every year by troupes among several communities worldwide.

Justice to these characters would be done and seen to be done only when each and every one of us gear his life to lead-by-example and walk-the-talk. Truly, there shall remain little or no need to command as in the Ramayana. *Veer Hanuman was, is and will always be a role model for all ...children, youth and adults, across generations, cultures and civilisations.*

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